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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 9 October 2008, at 10 a.m.

Chairman:	Mr. Majoor	(Netherlands)
later:	Mr. Peralta (Vice-Chairman)	(Paraguay)
later:	Mr. Majoor (Chairman)	(Netherlands)

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* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 97: Crime prevention and criminal justice (A/63/87, 89, 90 and 99; A/C.3/63/L.2)

Agenda item 98: International drug control (A/63/111)

Statement by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

1. **Mr. Costa** (Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)), introducing the item, said that poor socio-economic performance and weak rule of law were part of a vicious circle. Although the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) did not include strengthening the rule of law, the latter was a necessary condition for their realization. To that end, UNODC had called for support for countries in West Africa, Central America and the Caribbean that lacked the means to defend themselves from drug traffickers, and were increasingly unlikely to meet the MDGs. The Office was working with regional organizations and development banks to help those countries. In the same way, it appealed for aid for the opium-growing regions of Afghanistan and the coca-growing regions of the Andean countries: the eradication of drugs and of poverty were mutually reinforcing.

2. As the broker and guardian of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, the Office was providing technical assistance, notably to develop a review mechanism for the Convention and to elaborate anti-corruption strategies. However, many countries, including members of the Group of Eight, had not signed the Convention, while others lacked the means or will to implement it. One success was the recent Stolen Asset Recovery (StAR) Initiative, organized jointly by the Office and the World Bank and designed to recover funds stolen by kleptocratic rulers. Cooperation with national authorities and financial centres was progressing, and would benefit from further assistance.

3. Criminal activity, including drugs cultivation and trafficking, prospered in areas beyond the control of central government, where drugs and crime were often linked with politically motivated violence. In order to enhance security, it was necessary to make greater use of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its three protocols. The fourth session of the conference of the Parties to the Convention currently taking place in Vienna provided an opportunity to do so.

4. At the regional level, the Office had brokered the establishment of a Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Centre, which would soon begin operations. He was pleased to note that the Russian Federation had recently agreed to participate. A similar centre, the Gulf Centre for Criminal Intelligence, was being planned among the six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. The Office was promoting trilateral counter-narcotics cooperation between Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, and was working with the Caribbean Community and the Organization of American States. In West Africa, it was promoting a ministerial conference supported and hosted by the Economic Community of West African States, to be held in Cape Verde in late October 2008.

5. The Office was now the foremost provider of United Nations counter-terrorism assistance. It had developed a range of practical tools, including the software to strengthen criminal justice, combat money-laundering and prevent the diversion of precursor chemicals.

6. In order to combat human trafficking, the Office was delivering technical assistance to strengthen prevention, protection and prosecution. In so doing, it followed the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the Convention. He supported the proposal for a General Assembly plan of action against human trafficking, as a means to complement and support the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. The momentum of the General Assembly would be necessary to reinforce the Office's technical work.

7. Organized crime could also be a health issue. In addition to drug use, two examples were the sale of medicine and the forced removal of human organs, neither of which had been addressed by the United Nations. The Office's *World Drug Reports* gave strong evidence that the global drug problem had stabilized, although it had not decreased. Severe drug addiction had been contained to less than 0.5 per cent of the world's population. While continuing to take action to contain supply, the Office had over the previous years promoted the idea that drug addiction was a health and social issue. It held that true harm reduction consisted of avoiding drugs completely. He urged Member States to actively participate in the preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on illicit drugs to be held in Vienna in March 2009; it was important to

finalize a drug-control blueprint and a ministerial declaration.

8. The scope of the Office's mandate far outstripped its resources. It therefore relied on cooperation with a wide range of United Nations agencies to combat human trafficking and corruption. He was grateful to the Member States for their support, in particular regarding the initiative to form a working group on governance and budget at the Office.

9. **Mr. Dapkiunas** (Belarus) asked whether the proposed plan of action to counter trafficking in persons would not be an obstacle to the organizational and technical efforts of those States that were parties to the existing instruments and thus might reduce the effectiveness of their efforts.

10. **Ms. Zhang** Dan (China) said that officials in developing countries often fled with public assets to developed countries, where they abused the judicial system. She asked how the Convention against Corruption could be used to enhance international cooperation in order to retrieve stolen assets and bring those responsible to justice.

11. **Mr. Saeed** (Sudan) noted that the Executive Director of UNODC had not referred to cooperation between the Office and the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI). Such cooperation was supported by a number of General Assembly resolutions. He wished to know whether the assistance provided by the Office to UNAFRI was sufficient, or whether further support was deemed necessary.

12. He further asked what efforts the Office had undertaken to investigate the crimes committed by peacekeeping forces in several countries.

13. **Mr. Babadoudou** (Benin) said that the Executive Director of UNODC had not mentioned connections between criminal activities and political actors such as secret services. He asked whether the mandate of UNODC allowed it to confront the issue.

14. He further noted that the Executive Director had referred to drug addiction as a social and health issue. He asked whether that approach entailed support for decriminalization of certain substances, a measure that could further complicate the Office's work.

15. Moreover, the Executive Director had, in giving percentages for drug addiction, referred to a category of persons of an age to consume drugs. Yet drugs were dangerous for all age groups. Such an attitude could contain an element of hypocrisy. He wondered if the Executive Director could clarify his views.

16. **Mr. Rastam** (Malaysia) said that increasing piracy in international waters and robbery at sea were a source of concern. He wondered if such issues were within the mandate of UNODC and, if so, whether UNODC, in examining organized-crime trends, might study the money-laundering aspects of ransom proceeds and the use of such proceeds for the purchase and trafficking of firearms, since pirates were using increasingly sophisticated weaponry.

17. **Ms. Abdelaziz** (Egypt) asked for further insight into the usefulness of developing a General Assembly plan of action against human trafficking, which Egypt supported in principle, on the basis of similar initiatives taken by African leaders, most recently at the summit of the African Union held in July 2008. She also wished to know if the representation of UNODC throughout the world was sufficient or if more regional and national offices were needed.

18. **Ms. Mbalia Eyenga** (Cameroon) requested additional information on the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the feasibility of asset recovery, and asked what role UNODC played and what influence the Convention had on the principle of bank secrecy.

19. **Ms. Nawaz** (Pakistan) said it would be useful to have more information on the developments taking place at the current session in Vienna of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime if the General Assembly was to draw up a plan of action against human trafficking.

20. **Ms. Al-Zibdeh** (Jordan) wished to know more about existing initiatives for combating corruption in the Arab world.

21. **Mr. Costa** (Executive Director, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)) said it was important to distinguish the legal, technical role of the negotiations taking place at the current session of the Conference of the Parties in Vienna, which was attended only by those having signed the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational

Organized Crime, and the role of the General Assembly, which was to rally and express strong political will on the issue of human trafficking.

22. Operationally speaking, the Protocol was the best tool available to combat human trafficking. A statement by the General Assembly calling for universal ratification of the Protocol, especially for countries that truly needed such an instrument, was crucial for building political momentum. However, the Protocol was limited in scope; while it stated basic principles on prevention, protection and prosecution, it did not provide details on how to apply such principles, whereas a plan of action would.

23. Turning to the question put by the representative of Belarus, he said that although human trafficking was often simply seen as a crime, it was also linked to many other issues, such as a post-conflict situation or discrimination. A legal instrument such as the Protocol was important because it established parameters; however, the multifaceted problem of human trafficking could only be captured in a statement by the General Assembly and a plan of action.

24. On the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, he stressed that while it was not possible to impose such an instrument on any country, UNODC worked in cooperation with countries that had the political will to implement the Convention. After soliciting a State's interest, a mission was sent to the requesting State to determine the specific issues at stake and the type of resources involved. UNODC would then begin providing technical assistance.

25. There were three references to the principle of bank secrecy in the Convention, including in article 40, all of which stated that bank secrecy could not be considered an obstacle to domestic criminal investigations of offences established in accordance with the Convention.

26. Responding to the questions put by the representative of the Sudan, he said that regrettably, cooperation efforts between UNODC and institutes such as UNAFRI had not produced tangible results. Limited resources were often a problem, as such institutes had to operate within the budgets of the respective Governments, which often did not recognize the importance of preventing and suppressing crime. However, crimes committed by peacekeeping forces, did not come within the mandate of UNODC, but were referred to the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

27. Turning to the question put by the representative of Benin, he said that States parties themselves were responsible for implementing conventions. Some States parties were more proactive than others in doing so, especially after a change in regime. A number of studies conducted around the world by UNODC to examine the interactions between crime and development had confirmed that poorer countries were more likely to have high rates of crime, partly owing to Governments' lack of control over their country's territory. The studies had examined to some extent the role of politics in crime and the fact that criminal leaders sometimes became political leaders. Currently, a major source of concern was that drug traffickers in West Africa were so wealthy that they could buy influence among parties, candidates or political processes.

28. He stood by his previous statement that drug addiction should be considered a health issue and not merely a lifestyle choice, as there were numerous factors, including genetics and environment, that combined to create a context of vulnerability, which in turn could lead to drug addiction. He was against drug legalization; however, decriminalization should be considered in the context of an individual's health. Putting drug addicts in jail did not make sense, as addicts needed therapy and a general change in their environment in order to undertake changes in their behaviour. The 14-to-64 age bracket had been used mainly because drug addiction under the age of 14 was uncommon. While drug addition was indeed dangerous for all age groups, it was important to focus on prevention in youth, because youth addiction more often than not led to life addiction. Likewise, it was crucial to focus on entry points, such as the taking of cannabis.

29. Responding to the question put by the representative of Malaysia, he said that piracy was a source of great concern and that UNODC had been meeting with the International Maritime Organization in London and other agencies of the United Nations system in order to find solutions. It was not within the mandate of the Organization to carry out physical interventions, but money-laundering of ransom proceeds, and piracy, as a form of kidnapping, certainly were. In that regard, there were elements in the United Nations Counter-Kidnapping Manual and other legal instruments that might be applied to piracy.

30. UNODC had offices in 52 countries. That number was insufficient, but UNODC could not build more

offices without an increase in the regular budget, which had been stagnating for several years. It was important for UNODC to be more present in the Arab world. One of its flagship regional projects had been developed in Iraq; to combat corruption he hoped more would be done in the near future.

31. **Mr. Saeed** (Sudan) requested further clarification on the answers to his two previous questions. He wished to know not so much the role of UNAFRI and similar institutes, but whether UNODC provided assistance to UNAFRI, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions proposed by the Committee. Regarding peacekeeping operations, he wished to know how exactly UNODC worked with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) to improve crime prevention in peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations.

32. **Mr. Costa** (Executive Director, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)) said that no direct budgetary resources were devoted to assisting UNAFRI. As to the crime prevention in peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations mentioned in his statement, he said it referred to the prevention of crimes committed not by DPKO, but by individuals in countries where there were such forces, with a view to promoting peace and not conflict.

33. **Mr. Fieschi** (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and in addition, Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine, said that the European Union acknowledged the central role to be played by international cooperation in combating transnational organized crime and supported the mechanisms for police and judicial cooperation among States. It also strongly supported the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme as well as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols and hoped that the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties would facilitate progress on implementation of the latter, including the issue of a follow-up mechanism. The European Union would take an active role in combating organized crime and impunity, in which technical assistance was key.

34. Only the combined efforts of the international community could resolve the issue of human trafficking. Coordination among States and relevant international organizations must be strengthened in order to make full use of existing mechanisms at all levels. The European Union welcomed the efforts of UNODC in the area of human trafficking, particularly in respect of the negotiations on the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; it also welcomed the Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking, which had served to raise international awareness and encourage States to develop specific legislation to combat human trafficking.

35. Corruption was a major obstacle to sustainable development and good governance. States having ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption must continue their efforts to combat corruption, including by establishing a review mechanism to ensure implementation of the Convention. He hoped that the working group on that issue would conclude its discussions before the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties, to make it possible to adopt an instrument that would help Governments combat corruption more effectively.

36. The European Union condemned all forms of terrorism and commended the work of the Executive Directorate of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, whose efforts had made a significant contribution to the fashioning of a global anti-terrorist network that fought terrorism while maintaining respect for human rights and the rule of law. It welcomed the first biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy undertaken by the General Assembly on 4 and 5 September 2008, which had underscored that consensus was possible in the fight against terrorism.

37. The response to terrorism must be firm but just, and undertaken with full respect for human rights, international humanitarian law and international refugee law. In that context he recalled that the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance prohibited secret detention centres and was a valuable tool for the prevention of torture and degrading treatment and for upholding the rule of law. He stressed that respect for human rights was an asset, not an obstacle, in the fight against terrorism.

38. Drug abuse continued to destroy lives, support crime and threaten sustainable development. He therefore welcomed Security Council resolution 1817 (2008) calling for increased regional and international cooperation to counter the illicit production and trafficking of drugs in Afghanistan and to prevent the diversion of precursor substances for illicit use. The Government of Afghanistan and neighbouring and transit countries must ensure systematic notification of chemical precursors as provided for in the United Nations Convention against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and should register with and utilize the PEN Online system for the exchange of pre-export notifications.

39. The European Union supported the international instruments that provided the foundation for international efforts to control the drug trade. It looked forward to the adoption of a political declaration following the high-level review to be held in 2009 in order to update the international community's efforts to combat the illicit drug trade and guide the Organization's future efforts with a view to reducing both supply of and demand for illicit drugs. Actions to combat the illicit drug trade must however be carried out in full conformity with international human rights instruments, respect for the rule of law, and the principle of proportionality.

40. The principle of shared responsibility was at the centre of the Organization's drug policy and it was no longer accurate to speak of producer and consumer countries; most countries were in fact both producers and consumers of illicit drugs. Every effort must therefore be made to ensure the success of the forthcoming high-level session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs with a view to implementing an effective policy for combating the drug trade in the coming decade.

41. **Mr. Nhleko** (Swaziland), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), reaffirmed their support for the fight against transnational organized crime and illicit drugs and for the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the United Nations Convention against Corruption. He expressed appreciation for the technical assistance provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in particular its regional office for Africa.

42. No single country could be responsible for crime prevention and for the improvement of criminal-justice systems, especially in a world where globalization had facilitated multinational criminal activity, seriously affecting the economic and social well-being of States. Coordinated international action was therefore necessary to combat crime and terrorism, including technical cooperation in such areas as the elimination of money-laundering and corruption and the strengthening of criminal-justice systems. Joint strategies should be implemented to promote regional police cooperation to combat violent crime against vulnerable groups, especially women and children, for example the course on violence against women and children organized in May 2008 by the Southern African Regional Police Chief Council Organization. He looked forward to the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, in particular its technical cooperation strategy (A/63/99).

43. Terrorism could not be justified or tolerated. There must be a universal commitment at the national and international levels to suppress and eradicate that scourge. He therefore welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on assistance in implementing the universal conventions and protocols related to terrorism (A/63/89) and expressed support for the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Regional and international cooperation in the fight against terrorism must be strengthened, in particular with regard to capacity-building for the drafting of legislation, the elimination of money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. International partners should continue to support the efforts of the SADC States.

44. He expressed support for the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption and the SADC Protocol against Corruption. Institutions must be established and strengthened and provided with the resources to combat corruption at the national and regional levels. SADC had strengthened its collaboration with development partners and called for continued assistance, in particular in the area of investigative methods to counter corruption. Given the devastating effect of crime on national economies, he also called for increased resources for the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), which would enhance the Institute's capacity to provide technical assistance to African countries for the fight against crime and the strengthening of criminal-justice systems.

45. He welcomed the increase in international cooperation against the world drug problem and progress made towards implementation of the Political Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session, in particular in the areas of shared responsibility and national, regional and international efforts to reduce demand for and eliminate the supply of illicit drugs. He expressed concern that while use of cocaine and opium had decreased, consumption of amphetamine-type stimulants and cannabis continued to increase. Drug abuse and the associated problems of corruption, money-laundering and violent crime hampered social and economic development. SADC fully supported efforts to combat drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking. In recognition that young people were a particularly vulnerable group, SADC had designed community-based programmes to educate them on the dangers of drug abuse.

46. SADC member States had signed the SADC Protocol on Combating Illicit Drugs and the SADC Protocol on Corruption and most of them had signed the United Nations Conventions against Transnational Organized Crime and against Corruption. Mindful of the need to act at the national and regional levels, SADC had implemented a regional drug-control programme. SADC supported the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report on international cooperation against the world drug problem (A/63/111), in particular on the need for a balanced approach to the reduction of supply and demand, including with regard to allocation of funds.

47. The international community should continue to support SADC member States in implementing international legal instruments on drug control. SADC was committed to intensified international cooperation for the elimination of the illicit drug trade and for crime prevention and called for continued support for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

48. *Mr. Peralta (Paraguay), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

49. **Mr. Dapkiunas** (Belarus), speaking on behalf of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Uzbekistan, welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity (A/63/99) and expressed support for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and its strategy for the period 2008-2011. The legal workshop for CIS member States on nuclear, chemical and biological terrorism held in January 2008 was an example of cooperation between UNODC and the CIS Executive Committee, which should be strengthened.

50. The fight against terrorism at the regional and global levels was a priority for CIS member States. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy provided a solid basis for combating terrorism but its implementation was hampered by delays in the elaboration of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. All States should resolve existing disagreements and complete work on that important instrument.

51. The CIS States welcomed the recommendations of the second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption in February 2008, which would be incorporated into a draft model law on corruption to be adopted by CIS. CIS also welcomed the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols, currently under way; implementation of the outcome of that meeting would strengthen global efforts to counter crime.

52. The Heads of State of CIS had adopted a Declaration on coordinated migration policy to provide mutual assistance for the prevention of illegal immigration. A coordinating body had been established for that purpose. CIS was also working on the creation of special mechanisms to prevent and suppress the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons, which was linked to crime and terrorism.

53. Cooperation among CIS member States for combating specific crimes was being formalized via recent agreements on countering money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, theft of cultural values and migration. Three midterm programmes on combating crime for the period 2008-2010 had likewise been adopted. CIS Governments also attached great importance to combating human trafficking: a cooperation programme for 2007-2010 had been implemented, two model laws had been adopted and recommendations had been made for the harmonization of trafficking-related legislation. Human trafficking was an increasingly serious problem and CIS supported the elaboration of a United Nations plan of action on preventing trafficking in persons, and would share its experience in that regard.

54. On 10 October 2008 in Bishkek, the Council of the Heads of State of CIS would discuss increased cooperation on a wide range of issues related to the fight against crime. Those discussions would contribute to the progressive development of cooperative efforts among CIS member States.

55. **Ms. Aitimova** (Kazakhstan), speaking on behalf of member States of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), said that drug production, with its direct links to corruption, illegal migration, organized crime and international terrorism, had serious implications for international development. Drug abuse was also a key factor in the growth of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

56. CSTO members welcomed the UNODC *World Drug Report 2008* and would study the recommendations it contained. They supported the decision to hold a high-level event in March 2009, which would give new impetus to international efforts to combat illicit drug trafficking in order to move from the phase of containment to a considerable reduction in illegal drug usage.

57. The drug expansion in Afghanistan was a danger to security and stability throughout the world. The country accounted for 90 per cent of the global production of heroin, and a large proportion of the heroin seized in the territories of CSTO States was of Afghan origin. Drug abuse was increasing in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which were situated on the major drug-trafficking route from Afghanistan to CIS countries and Europe.

58. The drug market was currently restructuring, as poppy and cannabis were being replaced by more potent and dangerous drugs, such as heroin and opium. CSTO States were coordinating and harmonizing joint activities on a permanent basis in that regard. Some cooperation was taking place between law-enforcement and drug-control agencies of those States. Arrangements had been made to share information, operational investigative activities, cooperation and mutual assistance in eliminating illicit drugs and their precursors. The Paris-Moscow Process formed the basis for an international strategy to address the threat. Increasing the counter-narcotics cooperation between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and CSTO would make the regional efforts more effective. The full engagement of Afghanistan was essential to countering drug production there.

59. The Heads of CSTO member States had set the basis in 2003 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, for the international counter-narcotics operation "Channel". Another countermeasure was the Coordinating Council of the CSTO member States' anti-drug-trafficking authorities. The Coordinating Council had recently suggested that the "Channel" operation should be given permanent status. The number of participants and observers was growing every year and it had enabled the authorities of CSTO and observer countries to seize many tons of narcotic drugs.

60. The Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC), launched in 2007 through an initiative of Uzbekistan, was to be the central coordinating mechanism to fight trans-border drug trafficking and would cooperate with UNODC.

61. In November 2006, the CIS Council of Heads of State had approved a plan of action to implement the coordinated border policy of the CIS member States for 2007-2010. Recently, CIS member States had adopted a joint action programme to combat illegal trafficking for 2008-2010.

62. The capacities for combating drugs acquired by CSTO and through the Collective Security Treaty could benefit the entire international community. CSTO States were willing to cooperate with the United Nations and its Member States to create a unified anti-narcotics front.

63. *Mr. Majoor (Netherlands) resumed the Chair.*

64. **Mr. Collada** (Cuba) said that the gap between the developed and developing countries continued to widen, aggravated by external debt levels, unequal terms of trade, protectionism and decreased development assistance. Living conditions in the developing countries were deteriorating, leading to an increase in crime. He stressed therefore that the fight against crime should be based on addressing underdevelopment and the creation of a more just world order.

65. Technology had contributed to the spread of transnational crime and the emergence of supranational organizations with vast resources that undermined the stability of States. In a context of globalization, transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking were almost uncontrollable and no country alone could face the scourges of drug and human trafficking, crime and terrorism. The solutions were

well known and oft repeated, yet just as soon ignored or forgotten because they required a restructuring of the world order, respect for the principle of shared but different responsibilities, and domestic policies to ensure fair sharing of wealth.

66. Drug trafficking and its social and human costs constituted the most serious form of transnational organized crime. His Government was committed to regional and international efforts to combat that scourge, bearing in mind that the sovereignty of States must be respected and that the primary focus should be on States with high demand for illicit drugs.

67. There should be no double standard or hypocrisy in discussions of the problem of crime; no State should be singled out as good or evil. He deplored measures like the Cuban Adjustment Act, which encouraged illegal migration from Cuba to the United States, while the United States aspired to lead the fight against people smuggling. He found it paradoxical that Luis Posada Carriles, a known terrorist, lived unmolested in a State which held itself to be a champion of the fight against terrorism.

68. Despite the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States, his Government had achieved many successes in the fight against crime and drugs. Cuban legislation severely punished money-laundering, arms trafficking and organized crime. The cornerstone of its crime-prevention effort was education, especially for children and youth, and the reintegration of offenders into society. Cuba had participated in international efforts to combat transnational crime and the illicit drug trade and had entered into numerous cooperation agreements. It had even made concrete proposals to the United States, but they had been rejected. It would continue to cooperate with the United Nations in the areas of crime prevention and drug control.

69. **Mr. Johnson** (United States of America) said that corruption was a grave threat to all Governments and societies and created an enabling environment for criminals, insurgents and terrorists. His Government took global corruption seriously. The Foreign Corrupt Practices Act had been adopted as early as 1977, collaboration with foreign authorities on bribery cases had been enhanced and more effective use was being made of mutual legal-assistance mechanisms. At the Federal Government level alone almost 7,000 charges of public corruption had been laid. As a result, American companies had developed codes of conduct, anti-corruption training programmes and hotlines, and protection for whistleblowers. Such measures improved accountability and provided models of good governance while proving that compliance was in fact good business. Some multinational companies nevertheless continued to maintain hidden accounts and pay bribes, unbeknown to investors and regulators, running the risk of civil and criminal prosecution in the host and/or home country, and making their business operations dependent on corrupt officials.

70. The United Nations Convention against Corruption provided a framework for States individually and collectively to prevent corruption and the paying of bribes, recover stolen assets and facilitate international law-enforcement cooperation. There was an increased awareness of the destructive effect of corruption thanks to the Convention and high-profile investigations fuelled in part by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Anti-Bribery Convention and the actions of the World Bank, which disqualified corrupt companies from projects it financed. Corruption and transnational organized crime were two sides of the same coin; he called on the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols to strengthen understanding of how the Convention could be used to combat crime, and welcomed the fact that the number of legal assistance and extradition cases arising out of that Convention had risen by 50 per cent since October 2006. Much of the progress relating to those two Conventions could be attributed to the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and he urged Member States to increase their extrabudgetary contributions to UNODC; his Government would provide $21 million in 2008 alone.

71. He cited Colombia as a success story in the fight against international drug trafficking. With United States assistance, the Government of Colombia had launched a multi-year initiative to break the power of the drug cartels and insurgent groups that had been on the verge of turning that country into a narco-State. As a result, the rule of law had been dramatically strengthened, the economy had grown and the insurgent groups had been greatly weakened, with many of their members demobilized and reintegrating into society. Coca cultivation had levelled off and potential production had dropped significantly.

72. In Afghanistan, poppy cultivation had dropped sharply, thanks to the efforts of the international community and increased political will on the part of the Government and some key provincial governors. As a result of the expansion of the authority of the Government, all of northern Afghanistan was essentially poppy-free, with cultivation concentrated in Helmand province, where the Taliban was the strongest and Government authority the weakest.

73. The forthcoming high-level session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs should focus on coordinating security, governance, alternative development and the elimination of illicit drug crops. Member States should ensure that drug-control strategies were part of a comprehensive security strategy and should integrate marginalized regions into the political and economic mainstream. They should also make full use of extradition and legal-assistance mechanisms, implement legislation for special investigative techniques and prevent money-laundering and the diversion of precursor chemicals. In addition to such supply-reduction initiatives, Governments must increase access to comprehensive demand-reduction and drug-treatment programmes.

74. No country or group of countries could fight the drug trade, crime and corruption alone. That fight was a long-term one that would require fundamental changes in the way Governments worked. The high-level segment of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs should breathe new life into the United Nations conventions on corruption and transnational organized crime, which were the cornerstone of international drug-control cooperation. His Government applauded the work of the Organization in drafting and adopting those instruments and in particular the creative and courageous work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. It looked forward to continued close cooperation with Member States and UNODC in fighting the drug trade and international crime.

75. **Mr. Sumi** (Japan) said that globalization had increased the threat from transnational organized crime. Implementation of the relevant conventions and protocols formed a basis for the strong international cooperation and coordination required to address that problem.

76. Transnational organized crime, terrorism, drug problems and corruption were interrelated and required a comprehensive approach: establishing the rule of law, developing human resources and creating the necessary socio-economic infrastructure. Aid policy should include a human-security perspective.

77. Japan continued to support the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, which should play an advocacy role and be a tool to promote technical assistance. Japan had introduced national measures to eliminate human trafficking and provide assistance for victims, and had led the discussion on cooperation against human trafficking in the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

78. His country had already ratified all the international counter-terrorism conventions and their protocols. Japan had held annual seminars since 2003 to facilitate ratification and implementation in countries of the Asia and Pacific region.

79. The most recent summit of the Group of Eight had recognized the importance of ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the provision of technical assistance to partner countries. The Convention's review mechanism should be implemented in the near future. The United Nations Asia and Far East Institute (UNAFEI), based in Japan, organized training courses and seminars for officials from around the world. A seminar in early 2008 had enabled high-ranking criminal-justice officials to deepen their understanding of combating corruption.

80. Japan had made efforts over the past decade to meet the goals and targets set at the 1998 special session of the General Assembly. The problems caused by synthetic drugs in Asia, drugs in Afghanistan and illicit drug trafficking via Africa were growing worse. Japan had chaired the donor-coordination meeting on drugs to enhance the synergy of assistance and therefore welcomed the discussion held in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs concerning the special session. Japan would continue its campaign to free society from transnational organized crime, terrorism, illicit drugs and corruption.

81. **Mr. Saeed** (Sudan) said he regretted that the order of the list of speakers had been changed without the Chairman consulting or even informing the delegations affected.

82. The draft resolution recommended by the Economic and Social Council in document A/C.3/63/L.2 built on long-standing efforts to combat transnational crime and would encourage further cooperation and aid

flows. It was also important to tackle poverty, which had contributed to the problem. There was therefore a need for sustainable development, the realization of the MDGs and a world order based on the fair distribution of wealth.

83. The Sudan had made considerable efforts to implement regional and international instruments concerning money-laundering, organ trafficking and transnational organized crime. In May 2008, the Sudan had hosted the tenth session of the Governing Board of UNAFRI, which had expressed its gratitude for the assistance provided by the United Nations. He urged Member States, non-governmental organizations and the international community to continue supporting UNAFRI in its valuable work.

84. The Sudan was enacting a number of programmes to combat drug abuse and trafficking, and was liaising with regional and international agencies. Human trafficking was also an urgent concern. It was essential to build on the results of the General Assembly thematic debate of 3 June 2008 and on the recent meeting of African leaders in Sharm el-Sheikh. The Sudan strongly supported current efforts to establish a global plan of action and would work closely with other delegations in order to do so: the challenges facing the world called for concerted action and greater technical support for developing States.

85. **The Chairman** expressed his hope that Member States would allow him some flexibility with the speakers' list in order to be able to accommodate speakers who could only be present at certain times. He had made similar adjustments at previous meetings and apologized if he had offended the representative of Sudan by not informing him of the change in advance.

86. **Mr. Saeed** (Sudan), speaking on a point of order, said that the speakers' list had been drawn up well in advance and the previous changes had been made only when a speaker was not present in the room. It was unacceptable for a major Power to be suddenly given precedence over a smaller country unless the speaker was a minister of state or high-level official. He hoped that the situation would not be repeated.

87. **Mr. Islam** (Bangladesh) said that the UNODC technical-assistance portfolio would only be effective if Member States took ownership of the reform process through long-term interventions. He commended the role of UNODC, while urging it to speed up the implementation of its strategy for 2008-2011.

88. Crime eradication and prevention remained a major concern of his Government, which was continuing its efforts to reform the criminal-justice system and enhance affordable access to it for the poor. Weaknesses in crime-detection and law-enforcement mechanisms were being addressed and the judiciary had been made independent of the executive branch. There was also emphasis on the regional dimension of crime prevention.

89. National strategies were inadequate for responding to transnational organized crime, as multiple jurisdictions and many different laws were involved. International cooperation should be developed under the aegis of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and Bangladesh supported all regional and international initiatives in that regard. The law-enforcement agency of Bangladesh worked in collaboration with its counterparts in other countries.

90. The independent Anti-Corruption Commission carried out investigations of high-profile financial crimes. Efforts to counter money-laundering were being strengthened in consultation with the relevant international agencies and development partners. The Government had taken measures to repatriate assets illegally transferred abroad. A UNODC technical-assistance project had contributed significantly to capacity-building for the relevant institutions, but further efforts were required.

91. Bangladesh had ratified all the international conventions relating to terrorism, and was in compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions. The Anti-Terrorism Ordinance and the Anti-Money-Laundering Ordinance of 2008 had brought domestic legislation into harmony with international law. The country report of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate had expressed satisfaction with the counter-terrorism measures in place in Bangladesh. The sectors requiring technical assistance for capacity-building had been identified.

92. The Expatriate Labour Policy provided protection for migrant workers and facilitated legal action against illegal recruiters. Police anti-trafficking units and a witness-protection protocol provided legal assistance and crisis centres were also available.

93. Bangladesh was party to all three major United Nations drugs conventions and exchanged information on drug trafficking with other members of the South

Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). There were strict penalties for drug offenders and a National Drug Demand Reduction Strategy was in place.

94. Developing countries were particularly vulnerable to the rapid proliferation of crime in its newer manifestations and should be provided with the resources required to tackle them. Despite the excellent efforts of UNODC, its governance structure and financial situation should be enhanced and a global alliance forged with the international community.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.